

Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 OMB-01 DRC-01 ACDA-19 AF-10

EUR-25 /160 W

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R 171000Z FEB 74

FM USINT CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5372

INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 0775

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR EG IS

SUBJECT: VISIT TO UNEF CAMP

1. GENERAL SIILASVUO HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO DEVELOP WIDER UNDERSTANDING LOCALLY OF UNEF'S FUNCTIONS. LAST WEEK HE HELD EXTENSIVE BRIEFING FOR PRESS CORRESPONDENTS. YESTERDAY HE INVITED AMBASSADORS/CHARGES REPRESENTING COUNTRIES WHO ARE PERMANENT MEMBERS OF SECURITY COUNCIL AND THOSE WITH CONTINGENTS IN UNEF TO WHAT TURNED OUT TO BE A FOUR AND ONE-HALF HOUR BRIEFING AT UNEF HEAD-QUARTERS LOCATED IN CAMP SHAMS NEAR HELIOPOLIS. SOVIETS WERE REPRESENTED BY A COUNSELOR RATHER THAN CHARGE, PERHAPS BECAUSE SOVIET CHARGE DOES NOT SPEAK ENGLISH. VISIT INCLUDED INSPECTION OF POLISH AND CANADIAN LOGISTICS CONTINGENTS, UN FILM ON UNEF, SOME REMARKS BY SIILASVUO AND LUNCH AT CANADIAN OFFICERS' MESS.

2. IT WAS EXPLAINED THAT BOTH POLISH AND CANADIAN CONTINGENTS ARE SELF-CONTAINED AND DESIGNED TO PROVIDE LOGISTICS SUPPORT FOR ENTIRE UNEF FORCE. POLES HANDLE
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EAST EUROPEAN EQUIPMENT, CANADIANS WESTERN EQUIPMENT.

CANADIAN BRIGADIER STRESSED THAT, DESPITE POLITICAL PROBLEMS WHICH HAD INITIALLY ARISEN RE INCLUSION POLISH CONTINGENT, THE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE POLES AND CANADIANS WERE GOOD. FROM OUR LIMITED OBSERVATIONS, THIS APPEARED TO BE THE CASE.

3. IN HIS BRIEF REMARKS TO THE GROUP, SIILASVUO EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH PROGRESS OF DISENGAGEMENT. WITHOUT IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS, HE INDICATED THESE WERE BEING SOLVED ON THE SPOT BY EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI COMMANDERS WITH UNEF HELP. HE SAID PERUVIAN AND PANAMANIAN CONTINGENTS HAVE NOW MOVED INTO SOUTHER PORTION OF BUFFER ZONE. OTHER AREAS WILL GRADUALLY BE TAKEN OVER BY UNEF UNITS IN NEXT THREE WEEKS. MOST OF PERSONNEL NOW AT SHAMS CAMP WILL SHORTLY BE MOVED TO ISMAILIYA WHERE UNEF FORWARD HEADQUARTERS WILL RELOCATE.

4. IN PRIVATE TALK WITH SIILASVUO PRIOR TO LUNCH, I ASKED HIM ABOUT UNEF'S TOOTH TO TAIL RATIO. HE AVOIDED PERCENTAGES, BUT ACKNOWLEDGED LOGISTIC SIDE WAS SOMEWHAT DISPROPORTIONATE. HE EXPLAINED THAT THIS IS DUE TO (A) INCLUSION OF SIGNALS AND ENGINEERS IN LOGISTICS CONTINGENTS, AND (B) CONTINGENCY PLANNING TO ENABLE CANADIAN/POLISH GROUPS TO SUPPORT A UNEF FORCE OF UP TO 10,000 MEN DEPLOYED ON BOTH EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN FRONTS. IN THIS CONNECTION, SIILAVUO SAID HE HAD TOLD SYG WALDHEIM THIS PAST WEEK IN GENEVA THAT HE IS PREPARED TO DEPLOY THREE BATTALIONS TO SYRIAN-ISRAELI FRONT IN LESS THAN 24 HOURS TIME ONCE DISENGAGEMENT DEVELOPS THERE.

5. MAJOR COMPLAINT OF CANADIAN AND POLISH OFFICERS WITH WHOM I TALKED WAS THAT THEY REGARD AS INADEQUATE SUPPORT FROM "UN CIVIL SERVANTS" IN NEW YORK. SOME REQUISITIONS AS FAR BACK AS OCTOBER HAVE ALLEGEDLY NOT YET BEEN MET. THEY DESCRIBED RED TAPE AS ENORMOUS. EILTS

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